



## What Happens to My Plants?

There are many steps (and many people) involved in creating the herbarium specimens that are housed at the San Diego Natural History Museum. The sequence of events that flows from collecting the plant specimen in the field, to filing the finished voucher plant specimen in the herbarium, is briefly summarized below.

1. Plant specimen is collected in the field, placed inside a single newspaper sheet, and added to the a field press (or other carrier)
2. A unique collection number is assigned and recorded on both the newspaper and in the field book, along with the field data
3. Specimens are cleaned, clipped, and properly arranged in the plant press at home; more detailed notes are added to field book after looking up any missing information
4. Data from field book are entered online (and will be used to create the label for the specimen)
5. Plants are dried in plant press (with cardboard blotters between each specimen) for 1-2 weeks
6. When completely dry, the cardboard is removed from between specimens



7. Specimens (still inside newspapers) are submitted to SDNHM stacked and tied in a bundle with a cardboard top and bottom for stability, and with the completed *Specimen Submission Form* on top
8. When submitted, specimens are frozen for 7 days before processing to kill any pests.
9. Labels (containing the data from step # 4) are printed and cut, and a checklist is generated for the notebook.
10. Specimens are removed from freezer
11. Labels are then added to each specimen and they are grouped into families

12. The identity of each specimen is then verified by the Botanist, who hand-writes the correct name in the space provided at the top of each label





13. Notebook checklist (from step # 9) is annotated with the verification
14. The Plant Atlas Database is updated with information from notebook
15. Specimens are put into a cabinet, ready for mounting by our volunteers
16. Each specimen is then affixed (glued) to herbarium sheet by the mounters, along with the corresponding label
17. Specimens are dried for 24 hours after being stacked under a heavy weight
18. Before being filed in the Main Collection, finished herbarium specimens are filed by the Parobotanist (collectors) name for a limited time to give them an opportunity to come in and look at their mounted specimens
19. Specimens are then organized alphabetically within Families
20. Specimens are accessioned
21. The Accession Number is added to the Plant Atlas Database
22. Specimens are frozen for 7 days to ensure they are pest-free
23. Specimens are filed in the Main Collection



Thank you for your part in this process! Your contribution to the San Diego County Plant Atlas is very much appreciated.